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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a study carried out during the 1993-1994 academic year that evaluated peace education curricula in selected Milwaukee (Wisconsin) public schools. Experimental and control sample populations were established with eight different classrooms, including two classes at a Montessori school and two classes at a neighborhood elementary school where teachers used the Second Step violence prevention curriculum. Control samples at schools that had similar locations, student demographics, and levels of academic achievement included two classes at a specialty school and two at a neighborhood school. Five observations at diverse times on different days were made in each class. Differences between the two samples were observed on classroom environment, content taught, teacher's style, and student behaviors. Experimental sample classrooms had more peace posters, student art work with peace themes, maps of the world, environmental pictures, and items that celebrated different cultures. They also had more animals and plants. None of the teachers were observed teaching much peace education content, yet the peace education classes scored significantly higher on four items examined and for particular student behaviors, including tolerance, compassion, communication, listening, caring, and touching. Findings from the project demonstrate that teachers in urban schools that adopt peace education practices can have a positive impact on levels of conflict in their classes. Students in these schools exhibited higher levels of conflict resolution skills and appeared to learn more nonviolent responses to conflict, especially in the Montessori school. A copy of the School Climate Questionnaire is appended. (Author/NAV)

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TEACHERS' RESPONSE TO CONFLICT IN SELECTED MILWAUKEE SCHOOLS

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A REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES,
MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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TEACHERS' RESPONSE TO CONFLICT IN SELECTED MILWAUKEE SCHOOLS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarizes a study carried out during the academic year 1993-94 to evaluate peace education curricula at two elementary Milwaukee Public Schools. Experimental and control samples were established with eight different classrooms. The experimental sample included two classes at a Montessori school and two classes at a neighborhood elementary school where teachers used the Second Step curriculum. The control sample at schools that had similar locations, student demographics and levels of academic achievement included two classes at a specialty school and two at a neighborhood school. Five observations at diverse times on different days were made to each class. Differences between these two samples were observed on the following dimensions: classroom environment, content taught, teacher's style, and student behaviors.

The classrooms in the experimental sample had more peace posters, student art work with peace themes, maps of the world, environmental pictures, and items that celebrate different cultures. They also had more animals and plants. None of the teachers were observed teaching much peace education content. The peace education classes scored significantly higher on four items, "Are students encouraged to think about peace?" "Are students learning about and developing alternatives to violence?" "Are peaceful stories presented in class?" and "Does teacher encourage students to develop a global awareness?" The experimental group scored significantly higher on the following items used to evaluate the peacefulness of a teachers' style, "Is the classroom democratic?" "Is the lesson being structured cooperatively?" "Are students urged to take different perspectives?" "Does this teacher promote self esteem?" "Are conflicts handled peacefully?" "Does the teacher model peace?" "Are activities student directed?" "Does this teacher comfort students?" and "Do students mediate their conflicts?" In the peace education sample students scored significantly higher for the following student behaviors: "Are students tolerant of each other?" "Are students compassionate to each other?" "Do students cooperate with each other?" "Do students give each other complements?" "Do students communicate feelings?" "Do students actively listen to others?" "Do students show they care?" and "Do students touch each other in peaceful ways?" A school climate questionnaire administered to staff at each of the schools indicated that the experimental schools had a more peaceful climate than the controls.

This research project demonstrates that teachers in urban schools adopting peace education practices can have a positive impact upon levels of conflict in their classes. Students in classes where teachers use a peaceful pedagogy and teach peaceful subject matter exhibit higher levels of conflict resolution skills. Students exposed to peaceful adult role models learn from them nonviolent responses to conflict. The most peaceful student behaviors were in the Montessori school, which shows the importance of a comprehensive approach to peace education.

Teachers' Response to Conflict in Selected Milwaukee Schools

In order to address problems of violence, the Milwaukee Board of School Directors in 1985 adopted a comprehensive peace education curriculum. Although this curriculum has been used for 10 years, to date there has been little research conducted to determine how effective these efforts are in reducing violent responses to conflict. This research project evaluates the effectiveness of peace education efforts in two Milwaukee elementary schools by comparing how teachers and students respond to conflict in classes where teachers use peace education curricula with responses in classes where teachers have no training in peace education.

In one experimental school teachers used the Second Step violence prevention curriculum which contains lessons on impulse control, emotional expression, perspective taking, problem solving, and anger management. This skill-based curriculum is designed as an insert into existing lessons. A teacher using the Second Step curriculum receives a series of three feet by two feet posters each of which shows a photograph exhibiting children in a conflict situation. On the back of each photograph are a series of questions that teachers read to students to get them to improve their level of awareness in certain key components of peacemaking. In response to high levels of conflict in this urban district, the Department of Psychological Services has trained teachers in the Second Step curriculum from 1991-1994. So far, staff of the department have trained teachers at two thirds of the elementary schools in the district. This research project was implemented with support from staff at this department.

At the other experimental school teachers were committed to the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori who developed a curriculum for young children that had a

specifically peaceful design. Her training methods give students the chance to interact socially in a secure environment. They emphasize "cosmic" education where each child, as a planetary citizen, has the responsibility to contribute to the general good (of the cosmos). Teachers in a Montessori classroom downplay competition and encourage children to be courteous to each other. They model peace by keeping their voices low. They also try to promote in children an inner discipline by letting students direct their own learning activities as opposed to an outer discipline where a teacher acts as an authority figure commanding student about how to behave and what to do. Children in Montessori classrooms learn about the independence of life, the natural consequences of their own activities, and a holistic perspective that emphasizes global concepts. They have the opportunity to make choices in a classroom that encourages children to build trusting relations.

This research project uses an observational methodology with sample and control groups to answer the following questions: Do the classroom environments established by teachers using peace education methodologies contain more objects promoting peace? Do peace educators teach more content addressing problems of peace and violence? Are their teaching styles more peaceful? Finally, in classrooms where teachers are consciously teaching about peace, do students exhibit more peaceful behaviors? This research project conducted in an urban area experiencing all the problems of violence associated with inner city life will attempt to discover if using peace education methods and content to respond to conflict produces peaceful classroom behaviors in children in urban schools.

METHODOLOGY

This research project was carried out during the academic year 1993-94. During the fall semester the principal investigator and a research assistant visited five different neighborhood schools in Milwaukee. Four were elementary and one was a middle school. At these visits the research team met with the principal and teachers willing to participate in this research. Classroom observations were made at three of these schools. During these visits members of the research team observed teachers' style, content taught, student behavior, and the classroom environment. Four observational instruments were developed as a result of these visits. Three of these instruments used a 5 point Likert scale going from "never" to "always." A midpoint was "50/50," and the two other points were "a little" and "a lot." A fourth instrument was developed that allowed observers to count objects in the classroom that promoted peace–cooperative work arrangements, books with peace themes, books with ecological themes, books with multicultural themes, displays of class rules, peace posters, displays about peace/nonviolence, student artwork with peace themes, items that celebrate different cultures, quotations with peace themes, pictures of peacemakers, environmental pictures, animals for students to take care of, maps/globes of the world, and maps of different countries. On one of the Likert-scale instruments observers noted peace education content–peaceful stories, global awareness, causes of violence, opportunities to talk about violence, peace projects, alternatives to violence, respect for different cultures, environmental issues, and gender stereotypes. Another instrument let observers indicate the peacefulness of a teacher's style by evaluating whether or not the classroom was

democratic, the lessons were structured cooperatively, conflicts were handled peacefully, the teacher modeled positive problem solving skills, people's boundaries were respected, and students mediated conflicts. With the final instrument observers indicated whether or not students were demonstrating peaceful skills–was there verbal and nonverbal hostility, or aggressive physical acts? Were students tolerant, compassionate, and caring towards each other? Did students give each other complements? Did they assume the perspective of their classmates? Were they aware of each other's emotional state? Did they control their aggressive impulses, communicate feelings, actively listen to one another, accept differences in each other, touch each other peacefully, and demonstrate positive anger management skills? During the first semester these instruments were field tested and refined.

During the second semester two classrooms at two elementary schools, "Shalom" and "Serene," were chosen for observation and two classrooms at two control elementary schools, "Calm" and "Quiet," were selected. The two control schools had similar demographics and test scores to the experimental schools, as can be seen in Table I. Shalom, a city-wide specialty school with a Montessori curriculum, was paired with Calm, a city wide specialty school. Serene, one of the schools visited during the first semester, was paired with Quiet. Both Serene and Quiet are neighborhood schools in similar neighborhoods. On the table below, the letters refer to the teachers observed at each school.

Table I

Characteristics of Sample Schools

School	Number of Pupils	Percent Caucasian	Percent Free Lunch	Mobility Rate	Iowa Test Scores: Reading 2nd	Reading 5th	Math 2nd	Math 5th
Shalom A B	532	36	38	8	66	58	75	75
Calm C D	551	39	39	9	64	61	62	53
Serene E F	529	44	60	17	35	38	63	47
Quiet G H	286	45	61	34	23	48	36	41

Table I uses school district records from 1991-92 to indicate comparability of the experimental and control samples used in this study. Quiet is half the size of Serene, but students leave that school at twice the rate they turn over at Serene (*mobility* rate).

The control schools were uncontaminated in the sense that no teachers at either Calm or Quiet had received any training either in the Second Step Curriculum or in Montessori methods. At Serene the same two teachers, whose classrooms were visited during the fall semester, were observed during the final stage of this research project. All teachers were given background questionnaires that asked about their responses to conflict and experience with peace education. Introductory and exit interviews were conducted with all teachers participating in this study and with their principals. Two focus group interviews with students were conducted at Shalom to evaluate their understanding of peace. Focus groups were not conducted at Serene because students observed were only in the first grade.

The principal investigator made five classroom observations for each teacher on different days of the week and times of the day, for a total of 40 observations. Fourteen classes, seven sample and seven control, were also observed simultaneously by a graduate assistant. Three observations of Second Step lessons were made at Serene. The other observations were of regular classroom instruction. All these observations were carried out during the spring semester. Correlations between these two observers on the instruments used to evaluate content taught and student behavior were not significant, which indicates confusion between the two observers about the meanings of the observational instruments. Significant correlations did occur between the two observers on 67% of the items on the instrument that evaluated teacher pedagogy, which indicates that this is the most valid instrument used in this study.

Because the size of these samples is so small, these results do not have much statistical power. An ANOVA analysis between the four teachers will allow for some significant comparisons. Participating teachers were asked to fill out the same observational instrument used to record levels of peace content in order to see how well observations agreed with teachers' perceptions of their own teaching. A similar comparison was done with the instrument used to evaluate peaceful skills exhibited by students. Furthermore, participating teachers at all schools and principals at each school were asked to fill out a 13 item school climate questionnaire (see Appendix A).

BACKGROUND OF TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS

The two teachers at Shalom, A and B, had been certified by Montessori AMI (Association Montessori International), had an average of 18 years teaching experience, and taught grades 1-3. Teacher B, in addition to pursuing peace education in his classroom, had developed a set of peace principles for students on the playground: 1) Control your own body. 2) Tell someone if you've been hurt. 3) Respond to someone who has been hurt. As opposed to punishing students who are misbehaving, his approach gives children responsibility for their own behavior. As an adult monitor, he doesn't judge the children, rather he asks them questions like, "How can you comfort or aid that child who has been hurt?" Teachers C and D at Serene were both first grade teachers and had an average of 13 years experience. This was their second year using the Second Step curriculum. All teachers in the experimental sample were asked by their principals to participate in this project. Teachers E and F at Calm volunteered to participate in this project by responding to a memorandum circulated by the principal asking for volunteers. These participants had an average of 13 years experience. Teacher E taught second grade, while teacher F taught third grade. Although neither of these teachers had received any training in peace education, both had heard of it, teacher E through an inservice and teacher F through friends and a religious group. Both teachers at Calm used cooperative learning methodologies and problem solving techniques in their classrooms. Teacher E used a reward and punishment system in her classroom, where students were rewarded for good behavior on a point system and received checks for bad behavior. At the end of the day each student in a group of four with the most

points got a $10 voucher they could spend at a monthly auction where students bid on items donated by parents and the teacher. Teachers G and H at Quiet were recruited by the principal, taught third grade and had an average of 18 years experience. Neither of these teachers had ever heard of peace education. Teacher H has a very strong authoritarian approach to discipline. She said,

> I really believe in the old fashioned way of teaching and resolving any conflicts. That is with and through me. I feel that children should respect authority. Sometimes children are expected to act like adults, but they're not! They don't have the experience necessary to resolve all kinds of conflicts.

Teacher H is an African-American female. Teacher B is a Caucasian male. All other participants in this study are Caucasian females. Both observers are Caucasian males.

Interviews at both experimental schools indicated a strong commitment to the principles of peace education. All teachers at Shalom had been trained in the Montessori philosophy. At Shalom the Montessori curriculum coordinator ran an active peer mediation program for the whole school with fifth graders. Faculty and students at Shalom had adopted a "random acts of kindness" certificate, where students would post on a bulletin board names of people in school who acted kindly and write a brief statement about why they were being honored. Class leaders in the student council had discussed a ban on handguns being promoted by a citizens group in the city, had evaluated the peer mediation program, and debated how best to resolve playground conflicts. The principal investigator observed an end of the year award ceremony for peer mediators. The principal at Shalom, who had taught and been an administrator at

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traditional elementary schools, felt the students were more honest and open there. He said, "What I find refreshing here is that when students solve a problem, it stays solved."

The principal at Serene evidenced a strong commitment to the principles of peace education. In addition to the Second Step program, she had instituted a "stop and think" program that provided a way for children to deal with conflicts. She and her staff have taught children at Serene three ways of responding to conflict: (1) ignore the conflict and walk away, (2) talk it out with the individuals involved, and (3) get an adult to mediate. The principal stated that she valued this approach because it provides her with intermediate steps to deal with student conflicts. Otherwise her authority is "ultimate," with suspensions or calling parents. The "Stop and Think" program has made pupils more responsible for their actions. Both the principal and the two teachers participating in this research project indicated that Serene is getting more peaceful every year. When the principal first came here 4 years ago the school was in trouble. There was a high turnover rate. Teacher D indicated that she felt less secure on the playground than she had at an inner city school where she had previously taught. She stated that before this principal arrived, and they started implementing "Stop and Think" and other peace education activities, all the kids did was run wildly around the playground. They did not know how to play together. Now children play cooperative games which they have learned at Serene. Teacher C volunteered that 3 years ago she would have had a 50% turnover rate in her classroom. Now her classes are much more stable with less mobility. Parents are aware of how the staff at Serene deal with problems and want their children to attend that school, which now has a long waiting list of children. The

principal mentioned that she thinks that inclusion programming has had a positive effect upon school climate. The inclusion program mixes special education students in regular classes. There is no longer a mainstreaming effect where special children are pulled out of classes. This inclusion program has taught children at her school to be caring and empathic. The principal mentioned that she does not believe that peace education initiatives, such as Second Step and "Stop and Think" should be mandatory.

The principal at Calm had little or no understanding of peace education. Staff at Calm had abandoned a peer mediation program after one year because it took too much time. During the previous summer teachers at Calm had developed a comprehensive discipline plan aimed at getting teachers to respond uniformly to student conflict. This plan involved demerit slips and students staying in a detention room after lunch. If a student gets 3 demerit slips, he or she receives a school suspension in a quiet room where students work on instructional packets developed by exceptional education teachers. These packets emphasize getting along with each other. The principal at Calm had a hard time answering the question, "What do you do to promote peace at this school?" He seemed surprised by it and responded by saying that staff meetings were task oriented with faculty reporting on their work in committees. He does not think of promoting peace with faculty or students, but rather keeping order.

The principal at Quiet was interested in peace education vis à vis her role as a loving adult. She said she tries to run her school like a family. "I'm just a big mamma. As soon as I catch a child being good, I give them a hug right away. You have to get them to love you first, and then you give them a good educational program." In her

school she attempted to respond in loving ways to children who were experiencing violence in their lives. She often meets with parents to understand "what is going on in their children's heads," what their emotional lives are like, whether they are divorcing or losing a job, and gives them advice about not hitting their children. She promotes peace at her school by using nurturing skills. She mentioned several times during an exit interview that she was concerned about the mobility of students at Quiet who experienced considerable stress because they did not have stable homes. She says this high rate of mobility destroys the academic foundation of her school. She tries to "take the temperature of a child" and let children know that she is concerned about their pain. She has instituted a master discipline plan that lets students know what the rules and regulations are. Quiet has a one year old peer mediation program run by the gym teacher who reported that most of the students do not return because they solve their conflicts the first time. Two-thirds of the teachers at that school use this program, but neither of the teachers participating in this project used the program. The gym teacher reported that the peer mediation program has reduced fighting at Quiet.

The positive effect of these peace education efforts at Serene can be seen by comparing school discipline data at Serene and Quiet for the academic year 1993-94 during which this study was conducted. (The figures below are extrapolated by reducing the raw data from Serene by a factor of 54% which represents the ratio of the school sizes.) Serene had more than twice the peer mediations that did Quiet, 51 versus 29, which indicates an active program to deal with incidents of student conflict. Students at Quiet received 61 72s, which are disciplinary slips given out by teachers, versus 29 at

Serene. There were ten times as many pending suspensions at Quiet and three times as many formal bus complaints. There were 3 times the number of detentions and four times the number of school social work referrals at Serene, which gives further indications of attempts to handle student conflicts within that school. Attendance at Serene was 92% versus 89% at Quiet.

The positive effects of the comprehensive discipline plan at Calm are reflected in the following statistics: There were three times the number of 72s at Shalom than at Calm, twice the number of pending suspensions, 10 versus 4, and more than twice the number of formal bus complaints. (Eighty-one percent of these complaints came from 6 of the 70 buses used at Shalom.) Both Shalom and Calm had similar attendance rates and rates for formal suspensions.

School climate questionnaires filled out by three respondents at each school (two participating teachers and the principal) indicated that sample schools were more peaceful than the control schools. This instrument would have provided a more powerful analysis of school climate if each faculty member at each school had been asked to fill them out. A broader sampling of teachers would have provided a more objective measure of school climate.

RESULTS

Results from this investigation will be presented by instrument in the following order: Items that promote peace in the classroom, peace education content, criteria for judging the peacefulness of a teacher's style, and peaceful student behavior. An analysis

of these different instruments will provide data to evaluate how effective teachers participating in this study have been in dealing with conflict in their classes.

Items That Promote Peace in the Classroom

In all the classrooms, except teacher H at Quiet, the students worked at cooperative work stations. Teachers A and H had books with peace themes. All the teachers had books with multicultural themes; and all the teachers, except H, had books with ecological themes. The experimental classrooms had more peace posters, student art work with peace themes, maps of the world, environmental pictures and items that celebrate different cultures. Teachers in the experimental classrooms had more animals for students to take care of and more plants, although teacher G from one of the control schools had a large collection of stuffed animals. Teacher H had a collection of Spanish words on her bulletin board. The presence of these items in these classrooms helps keep peaceful images in students' minds. The instrument used to evaluate the peacefulness of classroom environment provided descriptive data but does not allow for any inferential statistics.

Are Teachers Teaching Peace Education Content?

Twelve items were constructed to evaluate how much peace content was taught by teachers participating in this study. Teachers participating in this study do not spend much time teaching peace education content. An anova comparison of the different teachers participating in this research indicates in Table II statistically significant

differences between the experimental and control groups on four of the items used to evaluate peace content.

Table II

Significant Means for Peace Education Content*

	Shalom	Serene	Calm	Quiet
Are peaceful stories presented in class?	.22	1.55	.50	.29
Are students encouraged to think about peace?	.22	1.44	.20	.29
Are students learning about and developing alternatives to violence?	.78	.14	.00	.00
Does teacher encourage students to develop a global awareness?	.78	.00	.00	.14

*All means are significant at the $p \leq .05$.

Differences in scores on the first two items above can be explained by the use of the Second Step curriculum, which allowed teachers to dwell upon stories that had the peaceful resolution of conflict as their main theme and encouraged students to think about peaceful methods of resolving conflicts. The higher score for global awareness comes from observations in Montessori classes where students were working on geography lessons, studying the political, social, and physical geography of countries around the world. (During the spring semester no geography lessons were observed at the first grade classes at Serene. This does not mean that those teachers did not teach geography. In fact, both teachers were observed teaching geography lessons during fall

semester visits when these instruments were being constructed and field tested.) The low scores for alternatives to violence implies that teachers participating in this study spend little or no time teaching about nonviolence.

During most of this research project observers witnessed no peace education content being taught. This lack of peace education content indicates that teachers participating in this study spend the vast majority of their instructional time teaching traditional academic content which does not include peace themes. They have not abandoned their assigned curricula in order to respond to student conflict by teaching about violence and peace. An exception occurred in one of the Montessori classrooms where a student, described by her teacher to have a mother addicted to drugs, wanted to talk about the subject of violence in her life. Teacher B responded to this request by devoting one of the weekly class council sessions, which was observed by the principal investigator, to that topic. This council was run by two students (on a rotating basis by alphabetical order, so that each student in the class had an opportunity to facilitate a class council) who organized a discussion about violence in the lives of students. Pupils took turns going around the circle in a brainstorming session saying whatever they wanted about violence. At the end of the session Teacher B encouraged students to talk about peace.

One limitation of this research design is that five classroom visits, each lasting about one hour, do not provide a complete overview of all content taught by that teacher. In order to compare observations with teachers' understanding of how often they taught peace content evaluated on items used in this instrument, teachers were asked to fill out

the same questionnaire. Their responses to each item are compared in Table III with the average responses by the observers. Table III underscores the value of the Second Step curriculum, when teachers at Serene have higher average observed scores on items number 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Table III

Differences Between Observed and Reported Levels of Peace Content Taught By Teacher

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H = Levels reported by teachers

O = Levels recorded by observers

0	1	2	3	4
never	a little	50/50	a lot	all

School	Shalom			Serene			Calm			Quiet		
Recorder	A	B	O	C	D	O	E	F	O	G	H	O
1. Are peaceful stories presented in class?	2	4	.22	4	2	1.55	4	4	.50	4	3	.29
2. Are students encouraged to think about peace?	3	3	.22	3	3	1.44	3	3	.20	4	3	.29
3. Do students talk about violence in their lives?	3	3	.67	1	1	1.25	3	3	.12	4	4	.18
4. Are students involved in peace projects/activities?	1	4	.92	4	2	1.40	2	2	.23	4	2	.07
5. Does teacher encourage students to develop a global awareness?	3	4	.78	4	3	.00	3	2	.00	4	2	.14
6. Are students studying and developing alternatives to violence?	3	4	.78	4	3	.14	3	4	.00	4	2	.00
7. Are students learning about the root causes of violence?	1	1	.09	1	1	.17	3	3	.00	4	3	.16

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School	Shalom			Serene			Calm			Quiet		
Recorder	A	B	O	C	D	O	E	F	O	G	H	O
8. Are violent current events discussed?	1	1	.09	1	1	.00	1	1	.00	2	4	.08
9. Is respect for different cultures taught?	4	4	.64	4	4	.36	3	4	.00	4	4	.18
10. Are environmental issues (nature) emphasized?	4	4	.81	2	2	.29	3	3	.35	4	3	.07
11. Do students learn about peace heroes and heroines?	2	2	.00	2	2	.18	2	2	.00	4	2	.26
12. Does the teacher challenge students to think about gender stereotypes?	3	4	.30	1	3	.24	3	2	.30	3	2	.28

On all these items teachers thought they were teaching more content than was observed. This could be because teachers were teaching peace education content at times not observed, or it could mean that there is considerable confusion about peace education content, or that the observers had more rigorous interpretations about peace education content. This was observed with teacher C who gave herself a 4 for item 1. When asked about this discrepancy, she said that she never presented violent stories, therefore all her stories were peaceful. Observers were looking for stories that emphasized the peaceful resolution of conflict, which were observed more often at Serene because of the teachers' use of the Second Step curriculum. This discrepancy between observations and self reports could also mean that teachers believe they are trying in general to promote peace in their classrooms; whereas observers did not see many specific instances of such content. Participants in this study could also be trying to

impress the principal investigator with their commitment to peace education curriculum and hence reported themselves higher than they actually were teaching peace content.

It is interesting to note on Table III the low responses given both by teachers and observers to items seven and eight, which focus on violence in students' lives. Even though these students live in an urban area with high rates of crime, murder, drug addiction, gangs, and domestic violence, teachers do not take time out to help their students adjust to the violence of their worlds. This might be because these are elementary students whose teachers believe such weighty discussions about violence might be more appropriate with older children. Such sensitivity to the appropriateness of talking about violence was indicated teacher D at Serene, who taught first graders, and was reluctant to overwhelm students with negative and violent images in her class saying, "They get enough of that on television and at home." Teacher H said that such discussions belong in the home and not in the school, although she did give herself a 4 in reference to item 3, "Do students talk about violence in their lives?"

As a result of this analysis, three items have been added to this instrument, "Do students have an opportunity to discuss safety issues?'" "Does the teacher challenge students to think about stereotypes and/or racial bias?" and "Are human rights discussed in this class?" These items are being added because they reflect concerns and comments gathered during the final stages of this research project.

Criteria For Judging the Peacefulness of a Teacher's Style

Teachers can provide important adult role models of peaceful behavior by the way they instruct their classes. Table IV below allows for a comparison of the experimental and control group in terms of significant measures of the peacefulness of a teacher's pedagogy.

Table IV

Significant Differences in the Peacefulness of Teacher's Style*

	Shalom	Serene	Calm	Quiet
Is this classroom democratic?[1]	4.78	2.80	2.25	1.63
Is the lesson being structured cooperatively?[1]	4.22	1.70	1.38	1.38
Are students urged to take different perspectives?	2.11	2.90	1.88	1.25
Does this teacher promote self esteem?[2]	4.56	3.80	3.75	2.88
Are conflicts handled peacefully?	4.44	3.00	1.57	1.38
Does the teacher model peace?[2]	5.00	3.50	3.14	2.88
Are activities student directed?[1]	4.44	1.60	1.50	1.38
Does this teacher comfort students?[2]	4.56	3.50	2.88	2.13
Do students mediate their conflicts?	3.22	1.30	.88	1.00

*All means are significant at the $p \leq .05$.
[1]meets a two-tailed test of significant - .001.
[2]meets a one-tailed test of significant - .01.

The high degrees of interrelater reliability on six of these nine items demonstrates that this instrument provides a reliable measure of the peacefulness at a teacher's pedagogy. From this table the influence of the Second Step curriculum can be seen in the higher score from teachers at Serene to "are students urged to take different perspectives?" On all these variables the scores at Serene are higher than at the control, Quiet.

The Montessori classroom, where students are choosing what to study, has much higher scores for "Is this classroom democratic?" "Is this lesson being structured cooperatively?" and "Are activities student directed?" All the classrooms observed for this study, except the classes at Shalom, used a teacher-centered instructional format. Classes at Shalom used a student-centered pedagogy. Montessori argued that a student-centered pedagogy was particularly conducive to peace. Concerned about the threat of fascism in her native Italy, she feared that students raised in traditional teacher centered classrooms would, as adults, blindly follow orders from political leaders. She thought that it was crucial that students learn in school how to make their own decisions and understand the consequences of their decisions.

As indicated in Table IV, the Montessori teachers were always observed modelling peace. They never raised their voices and encouraged students to solve their own conflicts. Their quiet demeanor was also more comforting to students and encouraged student self esteem at greater rates. Teachers at other schools in all classes raised their voices on more than one occasion. Students in the Montessori classes also had higher rates for "Do students mediate their own conflicts?" These were the only classrooms

observed that used a peer mediation program. In all other classes teachers resolved conflicts by telling students what to do. The peacefulness of the Montessori classes is also demonstrated by higher responses to the item "Are conflicts handled peacefully?"

Do Students Demonstrate Peaceful Skills?

In some ways this is the most important of the categories evaluated in this research project. If a teacher is using a peaceful pedagogy and teaching peace content, that teacher's class should be more peaceful, as demonstrated by student behavior. In a class where conflicts are being resolved peacefully, students are better able to focus on cognitive material. One way to evaluate the effectiveness of peace education efforts would be to measure how peaceful a student is. Unfortunately, such measures are hard to achieve. A researcher may observe a student acting peacefully at one point in time but a researcher cannot follow a student around to observe how that students acts at home and among friends. Ideally, an evaluation of the impact of peace education programs would look at students in peace education classes and students who had no exposure to peace education comparing the behavior of the two populations over time, but longitudinal studies with an urban population are practically impossible because of high rates of mobility of city dwellers. This project relies only on observations of student behavior in selected classrooms. The observations may not present an accurate picture of how a student behaves outside school. In fact, visits to the playground at Shalom and Quiet, indicated sharp differences between in class and outside class behavior.

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Table V indicates significant differences between the observation of student behavior at the schools visited in this study. Correlation studies provide low interrelater reliability coefficients for these items, indicating that they were interpreted differently by the observers.

Table V

Significant Student Peaceful Skills by School*

	Shalom	Serene	Calm	Quiet
Are students tolerant of each other?	4.33	2.89	3.50	2.14
Are students compassionate to each other?	4.11	3.00	2.40	1.83
Do students cooperate with teach other?	4.44	2.30	2.10	1.71
Do students give each other compliments?	2.44	1.70	1.50	.71
Do students assume the perspective of other students?	2.33	2.40	1.40	.71
Do students communicate feelings?	1.78	2.70	1.40	1.00
Do students actively listen to others?	4.00	3.40	2.90	2.29
Do students show others they care?	3.88	3.00	2.30	2.29
Do students touch each other in peaceful ways?	3.44	2.11	1.70	1.57

*All averages are significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

Here the students at the Montessori school scored higher than students at all other schools on tolerance, compassion, cooperation, complements, caring, peaceful touch,

and active listening. Students in the Second Step classrooms scored highest on perspective taking and communication of feelings. This was very evident to observers who would often hear students articulate feelings in the classes at Serene. Second Step students exhibit more compassion, caring, peaceful touch, communication of feelings, active listening, and cooperation than do students at a comparable neighborhood school, Quiet.

At each exit interview teachers were asked to rate themselves on how they try to teach certain peace skills. Comparisons between teacher self ratings and combined observations at each school are listed below in Table VI:

Table VI

Difference Between Observed and Recorded Levels of Peaceful Skills By Teacher

Teachers were asked, "Do you try to teach any of the following skills?"

0	1	2	3	4
never	a little	50/50	a lot	all

	Shalom			Serene			Calm			Quiet		
	A	B	O	C	D	O	E	F	O	G	H	O
Tolerance	3	5	4	4	5	3	5	3	4	5	4	2
Anger management	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	4
Compassion	4	4	4	4	5	3	5	4	2	5	4	2
Perspective taking	3	4	2	4	3	2	4	3	1	4	3	1
Empathy*	4	4	3	4	4	2	4	3	2	5	4	3
Emotional expression@	3	3	2	4	4	3	4	2	1	5	4	1
Active listening	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	4	4	2
Accepting differences	4	5	3	4	5	1	5	5	3	5	4	3

*Observed score comes from item number 8 on peaceful skills instrument, "Are students aware of each other's emotional state?"

@Observed score comes from item number 11 on peaceful skills instrument, "Do students communicate feelings?"

Here again, there are discrepancies between teacher's self reports and observed reports, although the discrepancies are not as great as in Table III. These differences point to some of the difficulties involved in a peace education approach to conflict in schools. These various skills are hard to master. Judging from the self reports on Table VI, the teachers at Serene are attempting to teach compiex peaceful skills. Just because the observers did not see students exhibiting high levels of these skills, does not mean that

teachers did not try to teach them. They may have taught them poorly, and/or the skills may be so complex that students have not yet adequately mastered them.

At all schools there is a fairly large discrepancy between observed and self reports of emotional expressiveness on the part of students. At Serene teachers report themselves much higher than observed for perspective taking, empathy, emotional expressiveness, and active listening–items emphasized in the Second Step curriculum. Since these teachers had received Second Step training and were aware that this research project was trying to evaluate the effectiveness of the Second Step curriculum, they might have given themselves higher scores on these items to justify their commitment to the Second Step programs. Teachers at Quiet also rated themselves higher on levels of teaching compassion, perspective taking, empathy, emotional expressiveness, and accepting differences than was observed in the behavior of their students. This could imply that those teachers valued these aspects of classroom behavior, even though the results of their teaching efforts were not observed at as high rates. This was evidenced by Teacher G who had, on her own developed an affective pedagogy. For example, in responding to a question about how she teaches anger management said," I teach and use 'I' statements." In terms of emotional expressiveness, she reported that she has been working on hard on expressing her own feelings to her students. In reference to "accepting differences" she has taught a lot about cultural differences and allows her diverse students to express the different cultures from which they come.

Teacher G indicates that there may be many different teachers in the United States adopting aspects of peace education reform in response to conflict in their classes, even

though they have never heard of peace education. Teachers at the other control school, Calm, exhibit similar responses to these items and during exit interviews indicated that they valued teaching the peaceful items used on this instrument, even though observers did not see as much evidence of this in student behaviors.

CONCLUSIONS

This research project shows that teachers in urban schools adopting peace education practices can have a positive impact upon levels of conflict in their classes. Students in classes there teachers use a peaceful pedagogy exhibit higher levels of student conflict resolution skills. These instructional activities help students learn about alternatives to violence and help offset the destructive impact of popular images of violence students receive through the media. In a peaceful class students will not be as distracted from academic lessons, as they would be in an unruly class rife with conflict. Peace education techniques allow teachers to focus more of their time in class on instructional activities as opposed to always having to play the role of judge and jury adjudicating student conflicts.

This research project shows that the Department of Psychological services at the Milwaukee Public School District has made a wise choice to invest in the Second Step curriculum. At Serene, where teachers use the Second Step curriculum, suspensions, bus complaints, and teacher referrals for disciplinary action were much lower than at Quiet, a comparable neighborhood school that does not use the Second Step curriculum. Such data indicate that the Second Step violence prevention curriculum can help teachers

respond positively to student conflict. This curriculum allows instruction in important skills students can use to resolve conflicts nonviolently. It encourages teachers to take time out of their lessons to focus on issues of violence that are of concern to young people. Although this is a small sample, with only two teachers, it is assumed that a larger sample would amplify these findings. Further research needs to be conducted with larger samples to verify the positive benefits noted here from the Second Step curriculum. Both teachers interviewed for this study enjoyed using the Second Step curriculum. They found it user friendly and reported high levels of student satisfaction with Second Step lessons. Students in Second Step classrooms are more tolerant, compassionate, caring, cooperative, expressive of feelings, and caring than students in similar control classes. These skills support efforts in schools to teach cognitive material and help students deal with violence in their lives.

Interestingly, the most peaceful classrooms were in the Montessori school, which demonstrates the importance of a comprehensive approach to peace education. Since teachers at Shalom scored higher than did teachers at Serene in most of the variables used in this research, it must be assumed that a comprehensive approach to peace education can have a more powerful effect than a brief addition to a traditional school curriculum. Schools in the United States are a long way from adopting such a comprehensive peace education philosophy. Most teachers and principles still believe that punishment and strong adult control are the best ways to respond to student conflict.

The higher scores at Shalom for peaceful student behavior underscore the importance of teachers modelling peace by using a peaceful pedagogy. A teacher who is

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a peaceful adult provides an important role model for young children who see so many violent adults acting destructively in their worlds. Focus group interviews with students at Shalom did not indicate that students had a very sophisticated understanding of peace concepts. In spite of the lack of peace education content taught a Shalom, students exhibited high levels of peaceful behavior which they learned by observing adults act peacefully in those classrooms.

This research underscores the important role that principals can play in creating a peaceful school climate. Both principals at Shalom and Serene were strongly committed to peace education and taken positive steps to provide students with peaceful ways to resolve their conflicts (a Stop and Think program and peer mediation programs). At Calm, the principal had no interest in peace education, while at Quiet the principal was interested in making her school a loving family, an important aspect of building a peaceful school climate, but had taken no steps to train her faculty in peace education. Teachers at both Serene and Shalom received strong support for their efforts to teach about peace at those schools. During interviews at both experimental schools, principals expressed great satisfaction with their peace education endeavors, reporting that their schools had lower mobility and suspension rates, and higher rates of parent involvement since they adopted peace education. Both public experimental schools have long lines of students waiting to get into them. Parents understand that their children need a peaceful environment to learn.

This project shows that teachers can benefit from adopting peaceful methodologies to deal with conflict in their classes. Many teachers who do not have a

repertoire of peaceful teaching techniques to resolve student conflict are exhausted at the end of the day from the stress of having to be both cop and instructor. These teachers are getting burned out and leaving the profession. This project shows that in urban classrooms where teachers attempt to teach about peace and teach conflict resolution skills that students mediate their own conflicts, manage their anger, are more considerate of the feelings of their classmates, accept differences in them, listen to each other better, and are both more tolerant and compassionate. Teachers adopting these techniques are adjústing to changing circumstances in an urban environment. They enjoy the reward of having to deal with less conflict which permits them to spend more energy on their pupils' cognitive development.

These findings must be viewed tentatively. The samples here are very small, and the reliability coefficients for two of the three instruments used in this study are very weak. The limited number of observations in each class did not provide a very comprehensive view of content taught by each teacher. However, they did allow for a reliable observation of teachers' styles. Since observers noted similarity in teachers' styles and student behaviors from visit to visit, it may not be necessary to make more observations on these dimensions. Further research needs to be done with larger samples to replicate these findings about the positive effects of peace education. This research project points to other ways of evaluating the effectiveness of peace education programs. What kinds of effects do they have with older children? Can longitudinal studies show that students demonstrate these peaceful learnings over time? Do students exposed to peace education take their understandings about conflict resolution out of the

classroom to their families, friend, and communities? What other differences show up between students exposed to peace education techniques and content compared to those who aren't? This study did not compare academic achievement scores of students participating in it. With a tighter control it might be possible to demonstrate significant differences in academic achievement for students exposed to peace education. This research has shown that teachers involved in peace education efforts benefit from them in many positive ways. Do teachers using these techniques stay in the profession longer than teachers who use punitive ways of responding to student conflict in schools?

Answering these questions will help provide justification for education reform efforts based upon peace education. Such reforms assume that students are at risk in school, not because they are stupid, but rather because they are traumatized by high levels of violence which distract them from the cognitive lessons they are supposed to master in school. Most educators are responding to conflicts in schools by using intervention strategies that target troublemakers. Believing that expulsions will make their schools safer, they respond to increased levels of violence with punitive measures. This paper argues for an educational strategy to respond to conflict in school in the postmodern world. Instead of threatening children with punishment, schools personnel can adopt preventative peace education curricula that teach children, who so often learn from the broader culture that violence is an exciting way to resolve differences, that nonviolence is a much better choice. Peace education reform rests upon the assumption that if people learn about nonviolence, they will have choices about how to behave and will not resort to violence. Teaching young children peaceful ways to respond to

conflict can help lay an important foundation for helping them become more peaceful as adults.

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24 August 1994 / 12:39

SCHOOL NAME:_____

SCHOOL CLIMATE QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey asks you to tell us abut your school. For every statement below, please let us know whether you "strongly agree," "agree somewhat," "disagree somewhat," or "strongly disagree." Circle the response that best describes how you feel about your school.

	Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree
1. Students have pride in our school.	1	2	3	4
2. Students have a lot of school spirit.	1	2	3	4
3. Teachers take students concerns seriously.	1	2	3	4
4. Students take part in solving their own problems in school and in the classroom.	1	2	3	4
5. Students cooperate with one another at school.	1	2	3	4
6. Students from different backgrounds and cultures respect each other at school.	1	2	3	4
7. Teachers spend too much time disciplining students.	1	2	3	4
8. Students are generally happy with the present discipline system.	1	2	3	4
9. Students know how to solve problems without getting into fights.	1	2	3	4
10. Students in our school really like school.	1	2	3	4
11. Teachers listen to both sides of the story when there is a conflict between students.	1	2	3	4
12. Students can't really solve their own problems at school. They need help from an adult.	1	2	3	4
13. There are a lot of fights among students in our school.	1	2	3	4